
Subject: Exceptions to Being Physically Present

Effective Date: October 1, 2005

Revised from:

Policy: All persons to be certified in the WIC program must be physically present at each certification appointment unless a Competent Professional Authority has approved an exception. These exceptions include applicants with disabilities that make it difficult to appear at the WIC clinic. Examples of such situations include:

- Medical conditions that necessitate the use of medical equipment that is not easily transportable;
- Medical conditions that require confinement to bed rest; and
- Serious illnesses that may be exacerbated by coming to the WIC clinic.

Any parent/legal guardian who is not able to be physically present for the certification of an infant or child may send the infant or child to the appointment with another adult, preferably someone involved with the care of the child. A parent/legal guardian must sign the Rights and Responsibilities before an infant or child can be certified. (Refer to Client's Rights and Responsibilities for more details about who may sign the Rights and Responsibilities form.) The person receiving program education in place of the parent/legal guardian at certification must also sign the Rights and Responsibilities.

Reference: CFR §246.7(p)

Procedure:

1. Usually the Caregiver will request an approval for the applicant/client to be absent when setting up the appointment, but circumstances may cause the request to be made at another time.
2. A Competent Professional Authority must approve the exception allowing the applicant/client to be absent. The reason for the exception must be documented in the client's KWIC record (such as on the Desktop in the Special Needs Field or the Notes tab in the Follow-up Wizard.)
3. At the certification appointment, the question on the Custom Tab "Is the client physically present?" should be answered for all clients. For clients with an approved exception, the reason must be documented on the Notes tab.
4. Certification must be completed according to normal policy with documentation of identity, income, residency, risk eligibility, etc. Medical data may be obtained from health care providers outside the WIC agency, but must be taken not more than 60 days before the certification appointment. The applicant's WIC categorical status on the certification date must agree with the categorical status on the data of the medical data. (See Determine

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Nutritional Risk – Anthropometric and Determine Nutritional Risk – Hematological Test for Anemia.)

5. Clinic staff are encouraged to schedule a subsequent appointment for a high risk or second contact when the client can be physically present. Staff should consider factors such as condition severity, duration, and degree of nutrition counseling by other medical providers.
6. A person who is hospitalized may be certified under this policy, but checks will not be issued until the applicant/client is discharged from the hospital.
7. If a Caregiver comes to an infant's or child's certification appointment without the infant/child and there is no reason to approve an exception to the physical presence requirement, the appointment must be rescheduled. As time permits, staff may collect information the caregiver has brought such as income, residency, and identity proofs.
8. If the applicant is a pregnant, breastfeeding, or postpartum woman and cannot come into the office due to a reason that meets the policy criteria (e.g., bedrest due to a difficult pregnancy or a disability that prevents her from coming to the clinic), paperwork can be completed by mail or other means and the certification may be conducted by telephone. Staff can contact the State Agency for permission to mail one month of checks. (See Mailing WIC Checks.) Arrangements should be made for an Alternate Caregiver to pick up future checks and the Proxy form provided and Proxy policy explained in case the Alternate Caregiver becomes unavailable. (See Proxies and Proxy Cards.)
9. Any parent/legal guardian who is not able to be physically present for the certification of an infant or child may send the infant or child to the appointment with another adult, preferably someone involved with the care of the child.
 - a. A parent/legal guardian must sign the Rights and Responsibilities before an infant or child can be certified. The person receiving program education at certification must also sign the Rights and Responsibilities. (Refer to Client's Rights and Responsibilities.)
 - b. No approval is needed for the parent/guardian to be absent, although it is helpful for staff to know who is bringing the infant/child.
 - c. When making appointments, staff should remind the parent/legal guardian that if another adult will be bringing the infant or child, the Rights and Responsibilities form is to be signed by a parent/legal guardian prior to the appointment. The parent/legal guardian should have the choice of having the Rights and Responsibilities/Food Record mailed or sending someone to get the forms so the Rights and Responsibilities can be signed and brought to the certification appointment.